

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Annual Gold Rush Days Event Coming to Old Sacramento State Historic Park Labor Day Weekend!

New for 2007: Lecture Series, Storytelling and Commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Arrival of the Sisters of Mercy

SACRAMENTO – Over the four-day Labor Day Weekend—August 31-September 3, 2007—the annual Gold Rush Days festival will “turn back the clock,” transforming Old Sacramento into a scene from the 1850s. Costumed re-enactors, musicians playing period instruments, and many aspects of life during the Gold Rush will be highlighted during the four-day event. Only horse-drawn vehicles and pedestrians are allowed in the National Landmark District and State Historic Park during this fun and festive event!

One of the highlighted attractions this weekend is the Embarcadero Tent City, located at the north end of Old Sacramento and representing the first “tent city” that sprang up as the Gold Rush commenced. At the Embarcadero Tent City, guests may take part in 1850s-style outdoor bowling; participate in games of chance at the Round Tent and Stinking Tent Saloons; participate in butter churning and biscuit making at the local restaurant; shop for period clothing and unique handmade wares at the general store; and tour a bathhouse where the water is changed after every tenth customer!

New to Tent City for 2007 is the introduction of a number of ethnic and cultural components (some of which were formerly presented in the “Ethnic Village” area during previous Gold Rush Days events). Selected merchants and re-enactors throughout Tent City will highlight Gold Rush era contributions to California’s rich and diverse cultural history and discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by various groups. Featured will be period artifacts, storytelling, food preparation and more. Dancers and musicians will perform according to long-held traditions. Among the ethnicities represented will be European, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American and California Indian.

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Of special interest for 2007 only will be a variety of re-enactments and activities commemorating the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy in Sacramento. When the Sisters landed on the waterfront in 1857, the city was in crisis with an epidemic of cholera under way. The Sisters of Mercy worked tirelessly and selflessly to ease the suffering of those who were sick and dying; their legacy lives on through today's Mercy Healthcare network and affiliated hospitals.

For guests interested in the West's military history and its transition from lawlessness to an ordered society, Gold Rush Days offers a variety of military re-enactors, from Buffalo Soldiers to Civil War infantry groups. The event features a "parade grounds" for mounted military units and marching units, and a grassy area where horses and pack animals are stabled, watered and fed during the weekend.

In another area of Old Sacramento, watch as Wild West gunfights take place during the day. Although open, armed conflict was fairly uncommon on the streets of California towns during the Gold Rush, dramatic images of gunfights have been etched into our collective memories through the magic of Hollywood westerns and television shows. Watch as trained "gunfighters" re-enact shootouts reminiscent of old-time TV shows!

New for Gold Rush Days 2007 will be a lecture series focusing on how the Gold Rush experience unfolded for various cultures and ethnicities. Also new for 2007, listen as storytellers and docents relate how emigrants traveled to California before, during and after the Gold Rush. Learn how the Gold Rush and statehood inevitably led to the completion of America's first transcontinental railroad, helping transform California into a diverse and trend-setting land of opportunity.

As visitors roam the dirt streets and boardwalks of Old Sacramento during Gold Rush Days, they will encounter horse-drawn wagons, carriages, and even a "ten-hitch" rolling along cobblestone streets, while "living history" characters stroll through town in period costume. The event includes street dramas, period musicians and entertainment, wagon rides, pony rides and gold panning. Automobiles are prohibited from entering the 28-acre Old Sacramento area during Gold Rush Days, but there's plenty of nearby parking and lots of fun for the whole family!

Admission is FREE; and event hours are as follows: Friday, August 31, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Saturday, September 1, 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, September 2, 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; and Monday, September 3, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, visit www.discovergold.org or call (916) 808-7777.

Gold Rush Days is produced and promoted in cooperation with the City of Sacramento, the Sacramento Convention & Visitors Bureau, California State Parks, the California State Railroad Museum Foundation, the Historic Old Sacramento Foundation, Old Sacramento Management and the Discovery Museum's Gold Rush History Center. For more information about Gold Rush Days specifically, or about visiting Sacramento generally, including lodging and attractions, visit www.discovergold.org or call (916) 808-7777.